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S P E E C H
OF
MR. N. F. DAVIN, M.P.,
ON
HOME RULE FOR IRELAND,
DELIVERED IN THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA,
APRIL 22ND AND 26TH, 1887.

Mr. DAVIN. I had hoped not to have addressed the House on this question. I had hoped that we should have reached a division half-an-hour ago; but, after the speech of the hon. gentleman who has just sat down, I find myself compelled to make a remark or two; and, as I have risen to my feet, I may possibly venture to ask the indulgence of the House while I enter into the question which has been already discussed at some length. The hon. gentleman who has just sat down is laboring under a complete delusion. He begins by identifying in many respects the Liberal-Conservative party here with the Tory party in England, and he is also under a historical mistake in supposing that all the oppression he deplures as having been dealt out to Ireland was dealt out to it by the Tory party, because the Whig party, which I suppose he would identify himself with, was in power in England at the time most of the Coercion Acts were passed. I rather think that the speech of the hon. gentleman, and indeed, if I may be bold enough to say so, many of the speeches which have been made on this question, seem to me to show a complete misapprehension of what is the disease from which Ireland suffers. Hon. gentlemen seem to think that if a Home Rule Bill were passed, if Home Rule were given to Ireland, you would then minister to her diseased mind and pluck it from her memory its rooted sorrow; but if you had Home Rule in Ireland to-morrow, you would have there the same number of tenants

as exist to-day, you would have about the same number of landlords. By merely passing a Home Rule Bill, you could not execute a transformation scene, and change the whole political and social condition of Ireland. Does any man suppose that the mere fact of having Home Rule would make the peasant who is now discontented, contented, would make the peasant who now thinks he ought not to pay his rent, pay it?

Mr. MILLS. Yes.

Mr. DAVIN. My hon. friend from Bothwell says yes; but I notice that when my hon. friend says yes to anything, it generally turns out that facts do not justify his affirmation. The disease in Ireland is a complicated one. It is inherited from successive confiscations; it is inherited from a state of things by which men, different in religion, different in race and different in social instincts, were placed by an unhappy fate to govern a country, a large portion of the population divided from them by this triple wall, and, if the condition of Ireland is to be dealt with in such a way as to make that country peaceful, as to make it happy, as to make it prosperous, then you must go deeper into the evils than by merely passing a Home Rule measure. I think it is not undesirable to make remarks like these, because it is hardly creditable to this Dominion of Canada, and to a great Parliament such as this, a Parliament which my hon. friend the member for Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) very properly described as the first Parliament after the Imperial Parliament itself, it is not creditable that we should discuss a question like this large Irish question and not go deeper than the surface, and think, like people orating in a debating society, that, by passing a measure like this, all the ills that afflict Ireland would be swept away. I am of opinion that it is desirable that a measure of local self-government should be given to Ireland, but I think, before any local self-government is given to the country, the Imperial Parliament should pass such measures as would help to get rid of the real causes of the discontent, because, if it be left to the local government—supposing you had a constitution there which would leave it to the local government to deal with these evils between landlord and tenant, of which we hear so much—then I am afraid that there would not be that measure of justice dealt out to the one side which would be desirable. Therefore, it would be, in my opinion, very improper to pass a Home Rule measure, unless you also have a measure dealing with the land. A comprehensive measure dealing with the land should accompany any measure of Home Rule; and, of course, I think that any

measure which should be passed, dealing with Home Rule, ought carefully to guard the rights and liberties of the minority, so that when we are asked to send a message across the water to have a Home Rule measure passed, we are asking a thing to be done that is complicated, difficult, onerous, and requiring the greatest reflection and care.—

House resumed adjourned debate on the proposed resolution of Mr. Curran (p. 46) on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland, the proposed motion of Mr. McNeill (p. 55) in amendment thereto, and the proposed motion of Mr. McCarthy (p. 98) in amendment to the said amendment.

Mr. DAVIN. Mr. Speaker ; It is with great unwillingness that I intrude myself on the House on any question not connected with North-West affairs ; but there are a number of hon. gentlemen listening to me who will easily understand that when a question like this comes before the House, I having taken a deep interest in the general question to which it belongs it would be very hard, and would cause some misunderstanding, if I did not express my opinion upon it ; and, therefore, I will crave the indulgence of hon. gentlemen while I make a few remarks on the resolution and the amendments thereto now before the House. When I rose, Sir, on Friday night, I was led to speak on a topic raised by the hon. member for Missisquoi (Mr. Clayer), who, asserting that the Tory party in England had dealt out nothing but cruelty to Ireland, gave the House the idea that all the Coercion Acts passed were passed by the Tory party. I knew that that was not the case, and, on the impulse of the moment, I questioned it. I have since analysed the Coercion Acts passed since the year 1800, and I find that in that period the number passed by the Liberal party nearly double the number passed by the Tory party ; and I may say this, that the beneficent legislation of Mr. Gladstone, with regard to the land, was anticipated by Mr. Disraeli in 1852, when he laid plans on the Table of the House embodying the recommendations of the Devon Commission ; and one of the most useful measures passed in regard to Ireland was Lord Ashbourne's Act, under which something like \$5,000,000 has been lent to the people of Ireland, as much more is about to be lent, and there are applications for as much again. The House is aware that Lord Ashbourne was Mr. Disraeli's Attorney General. So the hon. member for Missisquoi may feel a little more charitable towards the Conservative or Tory party, either in Canada or in England. In fact, Sir, the most liberal-minded Minister that ever led the House of Commons in England, the man who had the most

enlightened views of Ireland, the man who, if he had had his way would, I believe, have settled the Irish question something like eighty-seven years ago, was Mr. Pitt. Now, Sir, during this debate we have had many able speeches, and two remarkable speeches: I allude to the very able speech of the hon. leader of the Opposition, and the cold, clear, logical utterance of my hon. friend the member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy). But, Sir, I should like to call the attention of the House to what I was about to point out on Friday night, the fact that there are difficulties in Ireland with which, to deal effectively, will require years, and more than one, probably more than two or three Acts of Parliament. At the same time, in the sense in which the word grievances has been used from the time of the first protest against Poyning's Law to the time of O'Connell's agitation for Catholic Emancipation, and from that time to the time of Mr. Gladstone's legislation, there is no such thing at present in Ireland. At the present time in Ireland there is not a vestige of disability; yet how comes it that we have agrarian crimes? How comes it that the people are discontented? From the time of Strongbow and Fitzstephen the Irish Celt has fought in one fashion or another with the powerful intruders for the land, and those who were not and are not Celts, but Celticised, have taken up the struggle in the same spirit. When the Norman went into Ireland he found him there in the agrarian partnership of the clan, and that sense of property of dubious value still lingers in the mind of the Irish peasant. When we read in Irish history of chiefs and leading men having been forced to transplant and move westward, the reader generally thinks, probably, that the leading man only felt the sense of dispossession. The fact is that all his followers felt that they too were dispossessed. I will call the attention of the House for a moment to the language of Mr. Froude, because it is the language of a man who writes very adversely of Ireland, but still the language of a very well-informed historian. Speaking of an opportunity for Wentworth, Charles I's great Minister, to do a little plundering, he says:

"The state of tenures created an opportunity. The Commission was appointed to survey the lands, and to trace and enquire into the titles of their professing owners. In strict construction, four-fifths of Connaught was found to belong to the Crown; and Wentworth meditated taking advantage of the situation to make a new plantation. The intention, scarcely concealed, following so soon on the confiscation of the six counties, flung the Irish of the old blood into a frenzy of rage. Religious indulgence might satisfy the Anglo-Norman Catholics of the old settlements. The passions of the true Irishman were for the land, and he saw the land in large slices passing away from him to the stranger. What to him was King or Parliament, Calvinism, or Anglicanism. The

one fact, to which all else was nothing, was coming home to his heart, that the Englishman, by force or fraud, was filching from him the inheritance of his fathers."

And if we turn to page 217 of the first volume of Mr. Froude, we find him writing as follows:—

"When the State sold lands to raise money, or allowed men to sell to one another, it became necessarily more indulgent to neglect. But if, on the one hand, London speculators, or Crown favorites, could not be prevented from acquiring large estates in Ireland, on the other, the entire object of the confiscation was defeated if the population were left unshepherded; or if, for the landlords' convenience, the sons and grandsons of the old owners were left in possession as tenants retaining their local influence, still, to all intents and purposes, the practical rulers; and of the conquest, no result was left but the annual exasperation of the returning rent-day. An ownership, which consisted merely in robbing a poor country of a percentage of the fruits of its industry, was no benefit but a curse; and, although it might have been impossible to revive the laws of Henry VIII, a wise settlement of Ireland would have included a tax so heavy on all rents sent out of the kingdom, as would have compelled proprietors to sell their lands to others who would make their estates their own."

The first quotation refers to the time of Charles I, and the second to the time of the Revolution; but this state of things was going on all the time, and the tradition of it has lingered in the minds of the people, a people of great longevity and tenacious of tradition. Cromwell's war was followed by the war of William. William was an enlightened statesman who desired to carry on that war with as much consideration as possible, and if the ascendancy party in the Irish Parliament had allowed him he would, at a later time, have dealt out a beneficent policy; but although he was strong and victorious, he was unable to carry out the stipulations of the Treaty of Limerick, and the result of the violation of that treaty was that the Celtic gentry went over to France and Spain and the armies of the continent, and won, and their descendants have won, the very highest places in diplomacy and in the career of arms. The great French general, whose name is so dear to France, Marshal McMahon, is the descendant of one of these men who thus went out of the country after that unhappy transaction; and I remember—and it will probably interest those gentlemen from Lower Canada whom I see around me, to learn—that when, during the Franco-Germanic war, I had the pleasure of seeing Marshal McMahon, his face strongly reminded me of the face of an Irish gentleman. He had all the facial characteristics of an Irishman. The result was that the more Celtic portion of the people were deprived of their natural leaders. The legislation of Mr. Gladstone, as I have said, was beneficent legislation, but it must be confessed that it has not had a chance. When that legislation was passed, as much was given to Ireland as some of her

strongest friends who had fought unselfishly for that country had hoped for; and if that legislation had had a chance, if the people had, under it, set about their work with patience, industry, and steadiness, if they had availed themselves of an instrument, which, I believe, they had, under these Acts, to become landed proprietors, there is not the slightest doubt that there would be a very much more prosperous state of things in Ireland than exists at present. But if the statistics are looked at, it will be found a great mistake to suppose that Ireland has receded. On the contrary, she has, and is progressing. Although she has had some bad years, there is no doubt that in the past quarter of a century she has made steady progress; but on the heels of the Gladstone legislation, what happened? There sprang up another agitation, as the result of which the people are being educated into carrying on a kind of war; they are being educated to make struggling and agitating a necessity to their existence; and if you were to give them Home Rule, how do you suppose these people would become at once denuded of their habits, and settle down into ways of peaceful and quiet industry? So that, with regard to the agitation that is going on at present, it is desirable that it should be stopped by rendering it unnecessary. I said I am in favor of local government for Ireland—I mean a system of local government which would leave her connection with the Empire intact, and I believe that a local government which would give an opportunity to her aspiring spirits to have the direction of their country's local affairs—a local government such as our Provinces have here—would, I believe, terminate this agitation. Nor would there be any difficulty in now ceding local government to Ireland. That government would have been granted to her long ago, if some of her leaders, who have brought themselves into prominence on this Home Rule question, had not used language that alarmed, not only Englishmen and Scotchmen, but the best friends of Ireland the world over. Had they shown themselves perfectly loyal to the Empire in word and action, there is not an Englishman, from one end of England to the other, who would not have been ready to do all in his power to secure to Ireland local self-government. Let me say one word about the schemes of independence that I sometimes see sketched. For dark decades Ireland's soil has been wet with blood and tears; she has had a fearful baptism of sorrow for centuries, but no bloody era through which she has passed would be equal to the disastrous results that would follow any attempt to bring about independence in that country. What is meant by this phrase Home Rule?—because my hon. friend

who moved the motion did not explain to us either the meaning of Home Rule or his plan. Is it meant that the people are to be governed by their own representatives in the country to which they belong—in the country for which their forefathers fought and toiled, and in which their forefathers distinguished themselves? If so, Ireland has Home Rule at present. I consider that Ireland is governed by a Parliament that is her own Parliament, as much as it is the Parliament of England or Scotland. I consider that the Empire belongs as much to Irishmen as it does to Englishmen or Scotchmen. England is an old country, so is Ireland, so is Scotland, but the British Empire is but of yesterday. Go back a couple of hundred years, and where is the British Empire? The British Empire has been built during the past two centuries by Irishmen, Scotchmen and Englishmen, and if you go to India and the battle-fields of the continent, you will find Irishmen fighting side by side with Englishmen and Scotchmen, and not distinguishing themselves less than their brothers in arms. You will find them in every walk of life, active and fruitful—as statesmen, as literary men, as barristers, as mechanics, as laborers. In every walk of life you find the Irishman doing his part in building up the Empire during these two centuries. There is not a quarry from which a stone has been taken to build up that grandiose structure, where you will not find Irishmen working side by side with Englishmen and Scotchmen; there is not a stone in the majestic edifice of the British Empire in which there is not the mark of an Irish chisel. The man who would try to make an Irishman feel that he is an alien in the British Empire is either an ignoramus or a scoundrel. Therefore, if you want Home Rule you cannot want it in contradistinction to alien rule, because you have Home Rule already, and for that reason I prefer the phrase local government. Now, pursuing the line of thought that I was on a moment ago, let me take the words Celt and Saxon. I saw in a newspaper I was reading awhile ago the phrase "The Saxon must go." Why, if you were to go into Ireland at the present minute, and try to find out the Saxons in order to get rid of them, it would be a very difficult piece of work; it would be a piece of work very much like Shylock had to perform when he was told to take his pound of flesh; it would be a very difficult job indeed, just as difficult a job as it would be if you were to go into England in order to get rid of the Celts in England. England is largely Celtic. Long before the recent infusions, England, as Matthew Arnold points out, was largely Celtic; and in Ireland, as Froude says, the races are so mixed—Saxon, Norman, Dane, and so on—that it is

very hard indeed to find a pure Celt. So there is no ethnological base for those hatreds that are sought to be fanned as between Saxon and Celt. So early as the fourteenth century, there was a statute of Kilkenny passed forbidding Englishmen, English settlers, that is, Norman settlers, to assume Irish names. Therefore, names are no guide. A name may show that a man must infallibly have other blood than that of a Celt in him—as for instance, we have the name of the distinguished leader of the Opposition. That is not an Irish name; it is a Norman name. But many Irishmen who have Irish names, really Celtic names, are actually the descendants of men who assumed those names and became, according to a Latin proverb, more Irish than the Irish themselves. Then, religion is no test, although I saw that a late mayor of Dublin put out the banner "Faith and Fatherland." Of course, if that is put out, they ought to expel Mr. Parnell right away, and they will have to get rid of the Floods and the Grattans and the Curraens, and a great number of their distinguished men. But I want to emphasise this still more. Tipperary is supposed to be the most characteristically Irish county in Ireland. What are the facts? The fact is that Tipperary was colonised by Cromwell's Ironsides. How are they Catholic to-day? I will tell you. The miserable and abominable way in which the English Church was exploited—men taking orders in it and not doing any duties in connection therewith—left that county as it left other parts of Ireland, to the charge entirely of the more zealous Catholic priest, and the more zealous Catholic priest took an interest in education, and, in the course of two or three generations, the descendants of those Ironsides had lapsed into the faith against which their forefathers had fought so bitterly and so strenuously. Thus neither name nor religion will prove that a man is a Celt, and there is consequently no historical and no ethnological base for these unchristian, and I will say, unnational hatreds that I have seen advocated and expressed in various quarters. Therefore, on sentimental grounds, although that is the ground I find some people put it on, there is no reason whatever for granting a local Government or Home Rule to Ireland. Is there on practical grounds? Yes, Sir, on practical grounds it would be useful. I will give an instance to the House. There is a railway from Cork to Bandon. It is a little one-horse railway, something like a railway would be from Ottawa to Pembroke. I was assured by one of the promoters of that railway that it cost as much to get that railway Bill through the committees in London as it cost to build the line. That is a thing that ought to be got rid of. Can there be any

objection to having an Assembly to deal with a matter like that in Ireland? Besides, I think that, although the Imperial Parliament is taking many measures for the development of the material resources of that country, a local Assembly would have more time to devote to those matters. What a local Assembly could do was shown in the eighteenth century, when they had a Parliament, emasculated indeed, but still a local Parliament. In the middle of the eighteenth century Ireland was a country of all but limitless pasture. At the time of Arthur Young's visit, about a century ago:

"A change had set in. Yet he found one grass farm of ten thousand acres, and not a few sheep walks of five or six thousand acres. It is important to note that it was not natural adaptability which brought about this state of thing. One cause was the scarcity of labor, consequent on the incessant wars of the seventeenth century. But there followed on the Treaty of Limerick three-quarters of a century of repose. Population increased, but still cattle farming was continued. The penal laws prohibited Catholics from buying or leasing lands. Competition between tenants was kept down. Thus the breaking up of farms was prevented. The markets of England and the Colonies were closed against the Irish farmer, and he had no motive for increasing production. Besides, the disqualification of Catholics lulled the Protestants into a lethargic confidence. Complaints at last arose that there was not enough food grown for the population which had greatly increased. The Irish Parliament offered a bounty for all corn imported from the inland rural districts into Dublin. The effect was immediate. Arthur Young noticed in 1776 that the richest pasturages of Tipperary and Limerick were being broken up. The outbreak of the American war gave a new impulse to this movement."

So that we have an historical fact to show us what might be done by a local Assembly. Not only that, but there is a certain impulse of life given by contact, close contact, with a Government, and to-day, if you go through Dublin, you will find that it wears a widowed appearance; there is a venerable dinge over everything, and the people are entirely without that sense of being able to deal directly and rapidly with their local affairs that you find, for instance, here. Take Ontario. Suppose you were to take the local Assembly away from Ontario, there would at once be a great diminution of life in that great Province, and so in all our Provinces; and what I desire to see is such a local Assembly as would do for Ireland what the local Assemblies do for our various Provinces; and, if there were a local Assembly to do the same thing for England, and a local Assembly to do the same thing for Scotland, I do not think it would be a bad thing, because the weary Titan of the Imperial Parliament already staggers under the load she has to carry, "the too vast orb of her fate." From 1782 to 1798 the Irish Parliament had been relieved of those shackles which were placed upon her by one Act after another, an

by one usurpation after another, from the Poyning's Act down; and what do we find as the truth about the state of things between 1782 and 1798? Lord Clare, who was the leader of the ascendancy party, says, in a pamphlet published in 1798,—and his testimony, remember, was the testimony of a man opposed to the existence of an Irish Parliament:

"There is no nation on the habitable globe which has advanced in cultivation and commerce, in agriculture and manufactures, with the same rapidity in the same period."

Mr. Plunket, afterwards Lord Plunket, in January, 1800, said:

"Her revenues, her trade, her manufactures, thriving beyond the hope or the example of any other country of her extent; within these few years advancing with a rapidity astonishing even to herself; not complaining of deficiency in any of these respects, but enjoying and acknowledging her prosperity."

In December, 1798, the bankers of Dublin had a meeting at which they resolved:

"That since the renunciation of the power of Great Britain, in 1782, to legislate for Ireland, the commerce and prosperity of the country have eminently increased."

And, Sir, it stands to reason that if there is an Assembly whose sole business would be to deal with the material development of a country, on the very principle of division of labor, the work would be better done. Now, in regard to the union itself, two objects rose before the minds of the men who were engaged in bringing that union about. George III declared, when the union was brought about, that he consented to it because it "finished him with the Catholics." He thought he would never again be bothered with any Catholic claim. Well, that, of course, failed, because in 1829 Catholic Emancipation was passed in order to avoid a civil war. Mr. Pitt said, when the union was brought about, that he looked at it as a great means for tranquilising and pacifying Ireland. Well, that, of course, has failed. We keep there at present an armed police force such as is kept in no other part of the Empire, and that police force is supplemented by an army which, on the authority of an English Cabinet Minister, I can say is as large as the army with which we fought Napoleon. Now, Sir, that is a state of things that must be faced by English statesmen, and it must be faced by those among us who take an interest in Imperial questions—and it is palpable that we take a deep interest in Imperial questions, because we are turning from our legitimate business here to discuss this great question. It is very properly said that there should be some anxiety on the score of the minority. It is said

that the minority would suffer. I have heard people talk about arming. Why, Sir, there would be no necessity of arming. Of course, no Imperial Act would be passed that would not make provision for the protection of the minority; and I suppose the Catholics of Ireland would no more be able to act together than the Catholics of Quebec, or the Protestants of Ontario. I suppose the same laws which divide the Catholics of Quebec and the Protestants in Ontario, would divide the Catholics in Ireland. The same ambitions, the differences of view, all those mental and moral causes which divide the Protestants in Ontario and the Catholics in Quebec, would divide the large Catholic population in Ireland; and what should we see then? Why, we should see a Protestant vote in Ireland; and from what we see of the Catholic vote in Ontario, I suppose the Protestant vote in Ireland would be able to make itself felt. So, Sir, I do not think there is a danger of the minority suffering. As I said before, I doubt very much if there would be any danger of separation, although we read certain wild statements from the more ebullient spirits. There are many reasons why there would be no danger, in my opinion, of an agitation for separation. In the first place, the rebellion of 1798 was not caused by the fact that they had a separate Parliament. That rebellion was an echo of the French revolution—the French revolution was in the air everywhere; the Irish mind took fire at the French revolution, and that was the main cause of the rebellion. Any man who reads the history of the rebellion of 1798, will see how close was the correspondence between the Irish leaders of that day and the Directory in France. Then, again, if you give her a local Government her material interests are bound up with those of England. She exports at the present moment to the extent of £20,000,000 sterling, about \$100,000,000 worth. And how much of that goes to England? £19,250,000. So that if she wanted to separate, what would she have to do? She has not got a ship, she cannot become a naval power; and she would have to make a navy to destroy her best customer, and to destroy the navy of the greatest naval power in the world. So, Sir, I think we need not be alarmed on that score. Now, let me say one word in regard to the Coercion Bill. But for the word "exciting," but for the provision in regard to exciting in the Coercion Bill, I do not see there is much to object to. And the two magistrates—that is a thing, I confess, knowing Ireland as I do, to make one pause; because these two magistrates, would, in nine cases out of ten, belong to the landlord class, and we know

the state of mind that class is in at present. I am afraid that, under these circumstances, a man accused, to use an expressive though not very elegant phrase, might be "going to law with the devil in the court of hell." But, Sir, there is crime in Ireland. In the telegram that arrived this morning, which tells us that Mr. O'Brien is not coming here—and I think he does very well not to come here—there is a statement that persons will not be allowed to take a certain course. A circular is sent around Ireland telling the rack-renters to beware of sharpshooters. Well, Sir, of course the state of things in which crime, menace and threatening obtain, is not a state of liberty. The moment the law is paralysed the people are under a tyranny. I have here a few words from Lord Littleton on this subject, which, with the permission of the House, I will read. Remember, that at the present time freedom in all parts of the British Empire is no longer in danger from the encroachments of the Crown; it is in danger, if anything, from the people themselves. Lord Littleton says:

"In order to preserve the independence of Parliament against any future violation on the part of the Crown, it will be necessary to preserve the reputation of Parliament in the minds of the people, and the love of it in their hearts. How, my Lords, can this be done if they find it an obstacle to their equal justice, which is their birth-right and their safety? Upon the whole I am confident your Lordships will, on no account, depart from that maxim, which is the corner stone of all Government, that justice should have its course without stop or impediment. *Jus, fas, lex, potentissima sint.* This, my Lords, is the very soul and essence of freedom. Obstruct this, and you immediately open a door to all violence and confusion; to all iniquity and all the cruelties of private revenge; to the destruction of private peace, the dissolution of public order, and in the end, to an unlimited and despotic authority which we must be forced to submit to as a remedy against such intolerable evils. The dominion of law is the dominion of liberty. Privilege against law in matters of high concernment to the public is oppression, is tyranny, wheresoever it exists."

And, Sir, any secret society threatening people, any system or state of society in which crimes such as we hear of are perpetrated, that is a condition in which the people are subjected to the worst of all possible tyrannies. I confess it is very hard to resist the clear, cold logic of the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy). If the Imperial Parliament, a Parliament under which we live and move and have our being, were to lecture us on our legislation in this House we should kick like an overfed steer. If we should regard it as impertinent on their part to interfere with us, *a fortiori* it is impertinent on our part to play the legislative pedagogue to them. They are responsible; they know all the facts. It is a serious thing to interfere with a Government dealing with the suppression of crime. It is a very serious thing to take any course under such circumstances

which will weaken the Executive. I have in my hand a few sentences from Mr. Justin McCarthy's work, "The History of our own Time," on this point. Speaking of the interference of England with the Chinese Government, he says:

"It was no business of ours to ask ourselves whether the Chinese Government were perfectly sincere in their professions of lofty morality, or whether they, unlike all other Governments that have ever been known, were influenced by one sole motive in the making of their regulations. All that had nothing to do with the question. States are not at liberty to help the subjects of other States to break the laws of their own Governments. Especially when these laws profess to concern questions of morals, is it the duty of foreign States not to interfere with the regulations which a Government sees it necessary to impose for the protection of its people."

So that, Sir, we take a very grave responsibility upon us. I find, on reading the debates of the English Parliament, from time to time—and I have an instance of it in my hands in *Hansard*—that speakers in that Parliament constantly refer to opinions in the States, and here and make arguments from those opinions; and if a Cabinet Minister—and I have here an instance where a Cabinet Minister actually made an argument from the opinion of the States and Canada—so acts, then it may be, after all, a proper and right thing for us to give our opinion in regard to the Coercion Bill and Home Rule, notwithstanding Mr. Gladstone's snub as quoted by the hon. member for Simcoe. There are a large number of Irishmen and their descendants in Canada, and it is to their credit that they take a deep interest in the rock whence they were hewn, provided they do not allow their interest in Ireland to override their duty to Canada, provided they keep intact their interest and devote the necessary portion of their time to Canadian affairs—it is to their credit that they do not forget Ireland and still take an interest in her affairs. And, therefore, under these circumstances it may be not inappropriate that we in this House should do what many hon. members and many people outside think is wasting the time of Canada. But, as I say, the speech of the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) is, in my opinion, unanswerable as a piece of logic. If we were dealing with a matter of law, if we were dealing with anything but human beings, the speech of that hon. gentleman is unanswerable. But brilliant, logical, clear, strong as it was, it had one defect. It was defective in sympathy; and being defective in sympathy, I could not go with him and with his motion. But, Sir, we cannot afford—I speak now as an Irishman—Irishmen here and in the States cannot afford to do otherwise than to protest in the strongest possible manner against such crimes as are taking place in

Ireland. An Englishman, a Scotchman, a Frenchman, may philosophise an excuse, if he likes, for such crimes; but there is one man that cannot do so, and that is an Irishman who is jealous for the honor of Ireland and for his own. He can find no excuse for these crimes, and the men that perpetrate them are the greatest enemies to the local government of Ireland and to Ireland's prosperity, for they are driving capital away from the country; and I learn there is great depression in Dublin in consequence of these matters. And, therefore, while I cannot sympathise with the motion of the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy), yet in his attitude that those crimes must be denounced and put down I entirely agree. As to giving advice to English statesmen, I think, from one point of view, we are in a good position to do so. We live in a new country which emancipates us from Old World prejudices. In England and Ireland feudal structures anomalously linger in luxurious pomp or proud decay and prejudices cling round them like ivy round the long disused battlement. Under those circumstances a statesman like Lord Salisbury, or any English statesman, may actually not have so good a standpoint from which to arrive at a just conclusion on political questions, as have the people who breathe the broader and freer air of this continent. I confess, from what we know English statesmen have done for Canada, we cannot feel they are above the possibility of error; and looking back, as far as my reading of history goes, to the great names, as I suppose they will be called, the great statesmen who have ruled England, only three or four really understood how to deal with Ireland. Mr. Burke, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox had a clear grasp of the way to deal with Ireland, but the Nottinghams and Norths and such men were utterly incapable of dealing either with Ireland or with the Empire generally. I have here a telegram which I saw yesterday in the newspaper, and I was sorry to read that Lord Salisbury spoke as follows :—

"He denied that the Cowper Commission gave the fall in prices as the sole reason for the tenants' inability to pay their rents. If the rents were revised now there would be no argument with which to resist the constant demands that would be made for revision upon the slightest grounds. Why should a tenant who entered into a bargain which turned out unprofitable be differently treated from a person in any other business? When able to pay their debts they should do so. When it was impossible to pay, society recognised the case and provided relief for the insolvent. He thought the precedent applied amply to the present case."

Now, Sir, it may seem presumption on my part, but I have often heard Lord Salisbury speak, I have studied that eminent statesman a little, and I venture to say that that is a

very unsympathetic and very unstatesmanlike way of regarding this question. I think, moreover, that the present situation, the present opportunity, emphasises the great loss which England and the Empire sustained—to say nothing of the great loss the Conservative party in England sustained, in the death of Lord Beaconsfield. They were keeping his Primrose Day a few days ago, and that is only another instance, to which I could add hundreds, that you may build monuments to the prophets but you cannot catch their inspiration. Now, what is the meaning of our debating this question here to-day? I believe it was not before our constituents during the late election. What is the meaning of the Ontario Legislature discussing it? What is the meaning of the Quebec Legislature discussing it? What is the meaning of resolutions being passed in various assemblies, a large portion of those assemblies hardly caring one pin about Ireland? The fact is—and that fact had better be faced, if we are to understand the situation, and if we are to assume that attitude which is wise under the circumstances—the fact is that the poor, despised, down-trodden Irish Celt of half a century ago has triumphed. Beaten on the battle-field now by more skilful forces, now by larger numbers, treated now cruelly and now a little kindly by England—if he had been treated as cruelly as some desired he might have been exterminated, and if he had been treated more kindly he might have been reconciled; but treated as he has been he has remained unreconciled, and meanwhile what has happened? The battle has been transferred from the battle-field to the cradle, and the pure and therefore fruitful Irish woman has conquered. The cradle has won, and there is now a greater Ireland here. A Cabinet Minister has used the phrase that you have not only outside Britain a greater Britain, but you have outside Ireland a greater Ireland; and the significance of this debate, if it has any genuine significance that it is desirable we should lay to heart—I am not talking about looking after a vote here and a vote there—the genuine significance of this debate lies in that fact. I want to know if there is any general moral that an earnest man can take from this debate. Sir, there is, and it is this: to see and acknowledge the fact that while hon. members dislike the question, while some would like to see it kicked from the floor of the House, nevertheless the question is discussed, although it does not belong in any way to our business. What is the meaning of this fact? Its meaning is this: that this man that thirty, forty or fifty years ago was despised and trodden under foot, has become a power; it means that he insists on being considered, and that you have to consider him. Mr. Froude

points out how the effort was made from time to time to decelticise Ireland, and points out also that it always failed. At the time Lord John Russell's Encumbered Estates Bill was passed—a measure which though I do not say it was an unwise measure, was certainly, passed at that particular time, a cruel and short-sighted act—at that time I find that the *London Times*, the *Thunderer*, was writing about what that Act would do. It said this Act would give you Scotch and English tenants instead of Irish tenants; it would give you Scotch and English landlords instead of Irish landlords, and in a few years a Celtic Irish man would be as rare in Connemara as on the banks of the Manhattan. They were going to decelticise Ireland by means of the law of supply and demand. I remember that in 1882 I had a conversation with one of the most eminent men of the United States, whom I met on a train, and who was then aspiring to a high office. He told me his plans for annexing Canada to the United States, and his chief plan was that he had a millionaire, a man of English manners, one who had lived largely on the continent of Europe, and he said, I am going to send him to Ottawa, as a sort of diplomatist, and my directions to him will be to out-dinner Rideau Hall—he must beat the Governor General hollow in the matter of dinners. I said to him: Are you going to annex five millions of people with a gridiron? So these people were going to decelticise Ireland by the law of supply and demand. I need hardly say that experiment failed, and we are now face to face with the fact that we have, outside Ireland, a greater Ireland taking a deep interest in her affairs, though I am bound to say, not always a wise interest. But you must remember what I have shown you happened; and remember also that laws existed almost within living memory which kept the people of Ireland in ignorance. Remember all that, and remember too as this same eminent writer, Mr. Froude, lays down, you cannot, whether as a nation or an individual, commit a crime but you become a debtor—he puts it—a debtor to nature; I prefer to go higher than nature, and say that you become a debtor to the Power that rules this world, and the time will come sooner or later when the bill will have to be paid. Any such policy as was pursued towards Ireland would have been all right if you could have trammelled up the consequences. If the blow then given could have been the be-all and the end-all. But in these cases you teach bloody instructions which, being taught, return to plague the inventors, and by investigating and brooding on these wrongs, many of these wilder spirits in the United States have been inflamed. When I read what they say and

do I feel humiliated as an Irishman. But we must remember what were the circumstances which are responsible for this result. And in this relation I believe it would be a good thing to have a local Assembly, I believe it would be a good thing to have a local Assembly that would give the Irish people the excitement of local politics, and would help to develop the country. In that way I believe a blow would be struck at an agitation which is educating the rising generation in Ireland to be unfit for everything like peaceful and industrial life. The hon. Member for North Simcoe said he was making an unpopular speech. I do not know whether I have been making a popular or an unpopular speech. I have not been aiming at making a popular or an unpopular speech. I have often spoken to my countrymen on questions affecting Ireland, and they know well that I have never flattered them, for they know that I love them too much to flatter them. I prefer to tell them their faults, and for my part I do not care one straw whether my speech is popular or unpopular, provided I tell the truth. As the great Florentine says:

*"Pur che mia coscienza non mi garra,
Che alla fortuna, come vuol, son preso."*

The meaning of which in plain words is this, that provided I satisfy my conscience, provided I have the self-approving hour, I care very little; I think that is above applause, and it is a barrier against disapproval. In case the amendment should not be carried, I will, should I have an opportunity, present an amendment to the House that will express more nearly my own views than either of the amendments now before it.

Printed by McLEAN, ROGER & Co., Parliamentary Printers, Wellington
Street, Ottawa.

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